



Old South Leaflets.

No. 37.

The Voyages of the Cabots.

FROM HAKLUYT'S "PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS, VOYAGES AND
DISCOVERIES OF THE ENGLISH NATION."

The Letters patents of King Henry the seventh granted
vnto Iohn Cabot and his three sonnes, Lewis, Sebastian,
and Sancius for the discouerie of new and vnknown
lands.

HENry, by the grace of God, king of England and France,
and lord of Ireland, to all to whom these presents shall come,
Greeting.

Be it knownen that we haue giuen and granted, and by these
presents do giue and grant for vs and our heires, to our wel-
beloued Iohn Cabot citizen of Venice, to Lewis, Sebastian, and
Santius, sonnes of the sayd Iohn, and to the heires of them, and
euery of them, and their deputies, full and free authority, leaue,
and power to saile to all parts, countreys, and seas of the East,
of the West, and of the North, vnder our banners and ensignes,
with fiue ships of what burthen or quantity soeuer they be,
and as many mariners or men as they will haue with them in
the sayd ships, vpon their owne proper costs and charges, to
seeke out, discover, and finde whatsoeuer isles, countreys,
regions or prouinces of the heathen and infidels whatsoeuer
they be, and in what part of the world soeuer they be, which be-
fore this time haue bene vnknownen to all Christians: we haue
granted to them, and also to euery of them, the heires of them,
and euery of them, and their deputies, and haue giuen them
licence to set vp our banners and ensignes in euery village,
towne, castle, isle, or maine land of them newly found. And
that the aforesayd Iohn and his sonnes, or their heires and
assignes may subdue, occupy and possesse all such townes,

cities, castles and isles of them found, which they can subdue, occupy and possesse, as our vassals, and lieutenants, getting vnto vs the rule, title, and iurisdiction of the same villages, townes, castles, & firme land so found. Yet so that the aforesayd Iohn, and his sonnes and heires, and their deputies, be holden and bounden of all the fruits, profits, gaines, and commodities growing of such naigation, for euery their voyage, as often as they shall arriue at our port of Bristoll (at the which port they shall be bound and holden onely to arriue) all maner of necessary costs and charges by them made, being deducted, to pay vnto vs in wares or money the fift part of the capitall gaine so gotten. We giuing and granting vnto them and to their heires and deputies, that they shall be free from all paying of customes of all and singular such merchandize as they shall bring with them from those places so newly found. And moreover, we haue giuen and granted to them, their heires and deputies, that all the firme lands, isles, villages, townes, castles and places whatsoever they be that they shall chance to finde, may not of any other of our subiects be frequented or visited without the licence of the aforesayd Iohn and his sonnes, and their deputies, vnder paine of forfeiture aswell of their shippes as of all and singuler goods of all them that shall presume to saile to those places so found. Willing, and most straightly commanding all and singuler our subiects aswell on land as on sea, to giue good assistance to the aforesayd Iohn and his sonnes and deputies, and that as well in arming and furnishing their ships or vessels, as in prouision of food, and in buying of victuals for their money, and all other things by them to be prouided necessary for the sayd naigation, they do giue them all their helpe and fauour. In witnesse whereof we haue caused to be made these our Letters patents. Witnesse our selfe at Westminster the fift day of March, in the eleuenth yeere of our reigne.

Billa signata anno 13 Henrici septimi.

THE king vpon the third day of February, in the 13 yeere of his reigne, gaue licence to Iohn Cabot to take sixe English ships in any hauen or hauens of the realme of England, being of the burden of 200 tunnes, or vnder, with all necessary furniture, and to take also into the said ships all such masters, mariners, and subiects of the king as willingly will go with him, &c.

An extract taken out of the map of Sebastian Cabot, cut by Clement Adams, concerning his discovery of the West Indies, which is to be seene in her Maiesties priuie gal-

lerie at Westminster, and in many other ancient merchants houses.

IN the yeere of our Lord 1497 Iohn Cabot a Venetian, and his sonne Sebastian (with an English fleet set out from Bristoll) discouered that land which no man before that time had attempted, on the 24 of Iune, about fve of the clocke early in the morning. This land he called Prima vista, that is to say, First seene, because as I suppose it was that part whereof they had the first sight from sea. That Island which lieth out before the land, he called the Island of S. Iohn vpon this occasion, as I thinke, because it was discouered vpon the day of Iohn the Baptist. The inhabitants of this Island vse to weare beasts skinnnes, and haue them in as great estimation as we haue our finest garments. In their warres they vse bowes, arrowes, pikes, darts, wooden clubs, and slings. The soile is barren in some places, & yeeldeth little fruit, but it is full of white beares, and stagges farre greater than ours. It yeeldeth plenty of fish, and those very great, as seales, and those which commonly we call salmons: there are soles also aboue a yard in length: but especially there is great abundance of that kinde of fish which the Sauages call baccalaos. In the same Island also there breed hauks, but they are so blacke that they are very like to rauens, as also their partridges, and egles, which are in like sort blacke.

A discourse of Sebastian Cabot touching his discouery of part of the West India out of England in the time of king Henry the seuenth, vsed to Galeacius Butrigarius the Popes Legate in Spaine, and reported by the sayd Legate in this sort.

DOe you not vnderstand sayd he (speaking to certaine Gentlemen of Venice) how to passe to India toward the Northwest, as did of late a citizen of Venice, so valiant a man, and so well practised in all things pertaining to nauigations, and the science of Cosmographie, that at this present he hath not his like in Spaine, insomuch that for his vertues he is preferred aboue all other pilots that saile to the West Indies, who may not passe thither without his licence, and is therefore called Piloto mayor, that is, the grand Pilot. And when we sayd that we knew him not, he proceeded, saying, that being certaine yeres in the city of Siuil, and desirous to haue some knowledge of the nauigations of the Spanyards, it was tolde him that there was in the city a valiant man, a Venetian borne named Sebastian Cabot, who had the charge of those things, being an expert

man in that science, and one that coulde make Cardes for the Sea with his owne hand, and by this report, seeking his acquaintance, hee found him a very gentle person, who intertained him friendly, and shewed him many things, and among other a large Mappe of the world, with certaine particuler Nauigations, as well of the Portugals, as of the Spaniards, and that he spake further vnto him to this effect.

When my father departed from Venice many yeeres since to dwell in England, to follow the trade of marchandises, hee tooke mee with him to the citie of London, while I was very yong, yet hauing neuerthelesse some knowledge of letters of humanitie, and of the Sphere. And when my father died in that time when newes were brought that Don Christopher Colonus Genuese had discovered the coasts of India, whereof was great talke in all the Court of king Henry the 7. who then raigned, insomuch that all men with great admiration affirmed it to be a thing more diuine than humane, to saile by the West into the East where spices growe, by a way that was neuer knowen before, by this fame and report there increased in my heart a great flame of desire to attempt some notable thing. And vnderstanding by reason of the Sphere, that if I should saile by way of the Northwest, I should by a shorter tract come into India, I thereupon caused the King to be aduertised of my deuise, who immediately commanded two Caruels to bee furnished with all things appertayning to the voyage, which was as farre as I remember in the yeere 1496. in the beginning of Sommer. I began therefore to saile toward the Northwest, not thinking to finde any other land than that of Cathay, & from thence to turne toward India, but after certaine dayes I found that the land ranne towards the North, which was to mee a great displeasure. Neuerthelesse, sayling along by the coast to see if I could finde any gulfe that turned, I found the lande still continent to the 56. degree vnder our Pole. And seeing that there the coast turned toward the East, despairing to finde the passage, I turned backe againe, and sailed downe by the coast of that land toward the Equinoc-tiall (euer with intent to finde the saide passage to India) and came to that part of this firme lande which is now called Florida, where my victuals failing, I departed from thence and returned into England, where I found great tumults among the people, and preparation for warres in Scotland: by reason whereof there was no more consideration had to this voyage.

Whereupon I went into Spaine to the Catholique king, and Queene Elizabeth, which being aduertised what I had done, intertained me, and at their charges furnished certaine ships,

wherewith they caused me to saile to discover the coastes of Brazile, where I found an exceeding great and large riuer named at this present Rio de la plata, that is, the riuer of siluer, into the which I sailed and followed it into the firme land, more than sixe score leagues, finding it euery where very faire, and inhabited with infinite people, which with admiration came running dayly to our ships. Into this Riuer runne so many other riuers, that it is in maner incredible.

After this I made many other voyages, which I nowe pretermit, and waxing olde, I giue myselfe to rest from such trauels, because there are nowe many yong and lustie Pilots and Mariners of good experience, by whose forwardnesse I doe reioyce in the fruit of my labours, and rest with the charge of this office, as you see.

The foresaide Baptista Ramusius in his preface to the thirde volume of the Nauigations, writeth thus of Sebastian Cabot.

IN the latter part of this volume are put certaine relations of Iohn de Vararzana, Florentine, and of a great captaine a Frenchman, and the two voyages of Iaques Cartier, a Briton, who sailed vnto the land situate in 50. degrees of latitude to the North, which is called New France, which landes hitherto are not thoroughly knowen, whether they doe ioine with the firme lande of Florida and Noua Hispania, or whether they bee separated and diuided all by the Sea as Ilands: and whether that by that way one may goe by Sea vnto the country of Cathaia. As many yeeres past it was written vnto mee by Sebastian Cabota our Countrey man a Venetian, a man of great experience, and very rare in the art of Nauigation, and the knowledge of Cosmographie, who sailed along and beyond this lande of New France, at the charges of King Henry the seuenth king of England: and he aduertised mee, that hauing sailed a long time West and by North, beyond those Ilands vnto the Latitude of 67. degrees and an halfe, vnder the North pole, and at the 11 day of Iune finding still the open Sea without any maner of impediment, he thought verily by that way to haue passed on still the way to Cathaia, which is in the East, and would haue done it, if the mutinie of the shipmaster and Mariners had not hindered him and made him to returne homewards from that place. But it seemeth that God doeth yet still reserue this great enterprise for some great prince to discover this voyage of Cathaia by this way, which for the bringing of the Spiceries from India into Europe, were the most easy and shortest of all other wayes

hitherto found out. And surely this enterprise would be the most glorious, and of most importance of all other that can be imagined to make his name great, and fame immortall, to all ages to come, farre more then can be done by any of all these great troubles and warres which dayly are used in Europe among the miserable Christian people.

Another testimonie of the voyage of Sebastian Cabot to the West and Northwest, taken out of the sixt Chapter of the third Decade of Peter Martyr of Angleria.

THEse North Seas haue bene searched by one Sebastian Cabot, a Venetian borne, whom being yet but in maner an infant, his parents carried with them into England, hauing occasion to resort thither for trade of marchandise, as is the maner of the Venetians to leaue no part of the world vnsearched to obtaine riches. Hee therefore furnished two ships in England at his owne charges, and first with 300 men directed his course so farre towards the North pole, that euen in the moneth of Iuly he found monstrous heapes of ice swimming on the sea, and in maner continuall day light, yet saw he the land in that tract free from ice, which had bene molten by the heat of the Sunne. Thus seeing such heapes of yce before him, hee was enforced to turne his sailes and follow the West, so coasting still by the shore, that hee was thereby brought so farre into the South, by reason of the land bending so much Southwards, that it was there almost equal in latitude, with the sea Fretum Herculeum, hauing the Northpole eleuate in maner in the same degree. He sailed likewise in this tract so farre towards the West, that hee had the Island of Cuba on his left hand, in maner in the same degree of longitude. As hee traueiled by the coastes of this great land, (which he named Baccalaos) he saith that hee found the like course of the waters toward the West, but the same to runne more softly and gently than the swift waters which the Spaniards found in their Nauigations Southwards. Wherefore it is not onely more like to be true, but ought also of necessitie to be concluded that betweene both the lands hitherto vnknown, there should be certaine great open places whereby the waters should thus continually passe from the East vnto the West: which waters I suppose to be driuen about the globe of the earth by the uncessant mouing and impulsion of the heauens, and not to bee swallowed vp and cast vp againe by the breathing of Demogorgon, as some haue imagined, because they see the seas by increase and decrease to ebbe and flowe. Sebastian Cabot himselfe named those lands Baccalaos, because that in

the Seas thereabout hee found so great multitudes of certaine bigge fishes much like vnto Tunies, (which the inhabitants call Baccalaos) that they sometimes stayed his shippes. He found also the people of those regions couered with beastes skinned, yet not without the vse of reason. He also saith there is great plentie of Beares in those regions which vse to eate fish: for plunging themselves in y^e water, where they perceiue a multitude of these fishes to lie, they fasten their clawes in their scales, and so draw them to land and eate them, so (as he saith) the Beares being thus satisfied with fish, are not noisome to men. Hee declareth further, that in many places of these Regions he saw great plentie of Copper among the inhabitants. Cabot is my very friend, whom I vse familiarly, and delight to haue him sometimes keepe mee company in mine owne house. For being called out of England by the commandement of the Catholique King of Castile, after the death of King Henry the seuenth of that name King of England, he was made one of our council and Assistants, as touching the affaires of the new Indies, looking for ships dayly to be furnished for him to discover this hid secret of Nature.

The testimonie of Francis Lopez de Gomara a Spaniard, in the fourth Chapter of the second Booke of his generall history of the West Indies concerning the first discoverie of a great part of the West Indies, to wit, from 58. to 38. degrees of latitude, by Sebastian Cabota out of England.

HE which brought most certaine newes of the countrey & people of Baccalaos, saith Gomara, was Sebastian Cabote a Venetian, which rigged vp two ships at the cost of K. Henry the 7. of England, hauing great desire to traffique for the spices as the Portingals did. He carried with him 300. men, and tooke the way towards Island from beyond the Cape of Labrador, vntill he found himselfe in 58. degrees and better. He made relation that in the moneth of Iuly it was so cold, and the ice so great, that hee durst not passe any further: that the days were very long, in a maner without any night, and for that short night that they had, it was very cleare. Cabot feeling the cold, turned towards the West, refreshing himselfe at Baccalaos: and afterwards he sayled along the coast vnto 38. degrees, and from thence he shaped his course to returne into England.

A note of Sebastian Cabots first discoverie of part of the Indies taken out of the latter part of Robert Fabians

Chronicle not hitherto printed, which is in the custodie of M. Iohn Stow a diligent preseruer of Antiquities.

IN the 13. yeere of K. Henry the 7. (by meanes of one Iohn Cabot a Venetian which made himselfe very expert and cunning in knowledge of the circuit of the world and Ilands of the same, as by a Sea card and other demonstrations reasonable he shewed) the King caused to man and victuall a ship at Bristow, to search for an Island, which he said hee knew well was rich, and replenished with great commodities: Which shippe thus manned and victualled at the kings cost, diuers Marchants of London ventured in her small stocks, being in her as chiefe patron the said Venetian. And in the company of the said ship, sailed also out of Bristow three or foure small ships fraught with sleight and grosse marchandizes, as course cloth, caps, laces, points & other trifles. And so departed from Bristow in the beginning of May, of whom in this Maiors time returned no tidings.

Of three Sauages which Cabot brought home and presented vnto the King in the foureteenth yere of his reigne, mentioned by the foresaid Robert Fabian.

THis yeere also were brought vnto the king three men taken in the Newfound Island that before I spake of, in William Purchas time being Maior: These were clothed in beasts skins, & did eate raw flesh, and spake such speech that no man could vnderstand them, and in their demeanour like to bruite beastes, whom the King kept a time after. Of the which vpon two yeeres after, I saw two apparelled after the maner of Englishmen in Westminster pallace, which that time I could not discerne from Englishmen, til I was learned what they were, but as for speech, I heard none of them vtter one word.

A briefe extract concerning the discouerie of Newfound-land, taken out of the booke of M. Robert Thorne, to Doctor Leigh, &c.

I Reason, that as some sicknesses are hereditarie, so this inclination or desire of this discouery I inherited from my father, which with another marchant of Bristol named Hugh Eliot, were the discouerers of the Newfound-lands; of the which there is no doubt (as nowe plainely appeareth) if the mariners would then haue bene ruled, and followed their Pilots minde, but the lands of the West Indies, from whence all the golde cometh, had bene ours; for all is one coast as by the Card appeareth, and is aforesaid.

The large pension granted by K. Edward the 6. to Sebastian Cabota, constituting him grand Pilot of England.

EDward the sixt by the grace of God, King of England, France and Ireland, defender of the faith, to all Christian people to whom these presents shall come, sendeth greeting. Know yee that we, in consideration of the good and acceptable service done, and to be done, vnto vs by our beloued seruant Sebastian Cabota, of our speciall grace, certaine knowledge, meere motion, and by the aduice and counsel of our most honourable vnkle Edward duke of Somerset gouernour of our person, and Protector of our kingdomes, dominions, and subiects, and of the rest of our Counsaile, haue giuen & granted, and by these presents do giue and graunt to the said Sebastian Cabota, a certaine annuitie, or yerely reuenue of one hundreth, three-score & sixe pounds, thirteene shillings foure pence sterling, to haue, enioy, and yerely receiue the aforesaid annuitie, or yerely reuenue, to the foresaid Sebastian Cabota during his natural life, out of our Treasurie at the receipt of our Exchequer at Westminster, at the hands of our Treasurers & paymasters, there remayning for the time being, at the feasts of the Annuntiation of the blessed Virgin Mary, the Natiuitie of S. Iohn Baptist, S. Michael y^e Archangel, & the Natiuitie of our Lord, to be paid by equal portions.

And further, of our more speciall grace, and by the aduise and consent aforesaide wee doe giue, and by these presents doe graunt vnto the aforesaide Sebastian Cabota, so many, and so great summes of money as the saide annuitie or yeerely reuenue of an hundreth, three-score and sixe pounds, thirteene shillings 4. pence, doeth amount and rise vnto from the feast of S. Michael the Archangel last past vnto this present time, to be had and receiued by the aforesaid Sebastian Cabota, and his assignees out of our aforesaid Treasurie, at the handes of our aforesaide Treasurers, and officers of our Exchequer of our free gift without accompt, or any thing else therefore to be yeilded, payed, or made, to vs, our heires or successours, forasmuch as herein expresse mention is made to the contrary.

In witnesse whereof we haue caused these our Letters to be made patents: Witnesse the King at Westminster the sixt day of Ianuarie, in the second yeere of his raigne. The yeere of our Lord 1548.

"Sometimes in Wagner's musical dramas the introduction of a few notes from some leading melody foretells the inevitable catastrophe toward which the action is moving, as when in Lohengrin's bridal chamber the well-known sound of the distant Grail motive steals suddenly upon the ear, and the heart of the rapt listener is smitten with a sense of impending doom. So in the drama of maritime discovery, as glimpses of new worlds were beginning to reward the enterprising crowns of Spain and Portugal, for a moment there came from the North a few brief notes fraught with ominous portent. The power for whom destiny had reserved the world empire of which these Southern nations—so noble in aim, so mistaken in policy—were dreaming stretched forth her hand in quiet disregard of papal bulls, and laid it upon the western shore of the ocean. It was only for a moment, and long years were to pass before the consequences were developed. But in truth the first fateful note that heralded the coming English supremacy was sounded when John Cabot's tiny craft sailed out from the Bristol channel on a bright May morning of 1497."—JOHN FISKE, *The Discovery of America*.

The slight contemporary mention, which is all that we have of the voyages of the Cabots in 1497 and 1498, does not enable us to determine with precision the parts of the North American coast that were visited. We know that a chart of the first voyage was made; for both the Spanish envoys, Puebla and Ayala, writing between August 24, 1497, and July 25, 1498, mentioned having seen such a chart, and from an inspection of it they concluded that the distance run did not exceed 400 leagues. The Venetian merchant, Pasqualigo, gave the distance more correctly as 700 leagues, and added that Cabot followed the coast of the "territory of the Grand Khan" for 300 leagues, and in returning saw two islands to starboard. An early tradition fixed upon the coast of Labrador as the region first visited, and until lately this has been the prevailing opinion.

The chart seen by the Spanish ministers in London is unfortunately lost. But a map engraved in Germany or Flanders in 1544 or later, and said to be after a drawing by Sebastian Cabot, has at the north of what we call the island of Cape Breton the legend "*prima tierra vista*," i.e. "*first land seen*"; and in this connection there is a marginal inscription. Spanish and Latin, saying, "This country was discovered by John Cabot, a Venetian, and Sebastian Cabot, his son, in the year of our Saviour Jesus Christ M. cccc. xciii* on the 24th day of June in the morning, which country they called *prima tierra vista*, and a large island near by they named St. John because they discovered it on the same day." Starting from this information, it has been supposed that the navigators, passing this St. John, which we call Prince Edward Island, coasted around the Gulf of St. Lawrence and passed out through the Strait of Belle Isle. The two islands seen on the starboard would then be points on the northern

*This date is wrong. The first two letters after xc should be joined together at the bottom, making a v.

coast of Newfoundland, and a considerable part of Pasqualigo's 300 leagues of coasting would thus be accounted for. But inasmuch as the "Matthew" had returned to Bristol by the first of August, it may be doubted whether so long a route could have been traversed within five weeks.

If we could be sure that the map of 1544 in its present shape and with all its legends emanated from Sebastian Cabot, and was drawn with the aid of charts made at the time of discovery, its authority would be very high indeed. But there are some reasons for supposing it to have been amended or "touched up" by the engraver; and it is evidently compiled from charts made later than 1536, for it shows the results of Jacques Cartier's explorations in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Its statement as to the first landfall is, moreover, in conflict with the testimony of the merchant Robert Thorne, of Bristol, in 1527, and with that of two maps made at Seville in 1527 and 1529, according to which the "*prima tierra vista*" was somewhere on the coast of Labrador. It must be remembered, too, that John Cabot was instructed to take northerly and westerly courses, not southerly; and an important despatch from Raimondo de Soncino, in London, to the Duke of Milan, dated December 18, 1497, describes his course in accordance with these instructions. It is perfectly definite and altogether probable. According to this account Cabot sailed from Bristol in a small ship, manned by eighteen persons, and, having cleared the western shores of Ireland, turned northward, after a few days headed for Asia, and stood mainly west till he reached "Terra Firma," where he planted the royal standard, and forthwith returned to England. In other words, he followed the common custom in those days of first running to a chosen parallel, and then following that parallel to the point of destination. Such a course could hardly have landed him anywhere save on the coast of Labrador. Supposing his return voyage simply to have reversed this course, running south-easterly to the latitude of the English channel and then sailing due east, he may easily have coasted 300 leagues with land to starboard before finally bearing away from Cape Race. This view is in harmony with the fact that on the desolate coasts passed he saw no Indians or other human beings. He noticed the abundance of cod-fish, however, in the waters about Newfoundland, and declared that the English would no longer need to go to Iceland for their fish. Our informant adds that Master John, being foreign-born and poor, would have been set down as a liar, had not his crew, who were mostly Bristol men, confirmed everything he said.—FISKE.

John Cabot, like Columbus a native of Genoa, moved to England with his family from Venice, which had been his home for fifteen years, about 1490, and settled at Bristol. He may have been among those who were influenced at that time by the arguments of Bartholomew Columbus. Excited by the news of the first voyage of Columbus, he sailed from Bristol with a crew of eighteen men, probably accompanied by his son Sebastian.

in a ship named the *Matthew* or *Matthews*, early in May, 1497, and discovered what he supposed to be the Chinese coast, but what was the coast of Labrador or Newfoundland, on the 24th of June. This was the first discovery of America by any navigators sailing under English authority. It has been supposed that John Cabot died on a second expedition, which sailed from Bristol the next year, leaving the command to his son Sebastian, who may have conducted a third expedition in 1501 or 1503.

There is much that is obscure concerning the Cabots and their voyages. The best modern work upon the subject is Harrisse's *Jean et Sébastien Cabot*, published in Paris in 1882, but not yet translated into English. Biddle's *Sebastian Cabot* should be consulted by the student. Mr. Fiske's account, in his *Discovery of America*, is brief, but clear and critical. The most important discussion in English of the voyages of the Cabots is that by Charles Deane, in the *Narrative and Critical History of America*, vol. iii. The bibliographical notes accompanying this are very thorough, forming a complete guide to everything that is to be learned concerning the Cabots.

The volume by Richard Hakluyt on *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, containing the principal early notices of the Cabots, reprinted in the present leaflet, was published in London in 1589, several of the same notices having previously appeared in his *Divers Voyages touching the Discovery of America*, published in 1582. In Richard Eden's *Decades of the Newe World*, published in 1555, there had, however, appeared accounts of the Cabot voyages, the first in English which have come down to us. Richard Eden knew Sebastian Cabot, who was living in England at the time he wrote. Most of the early accounts of the Cabots, with careful historical notes, may be found in Kerr's *Voyages and Travels*, vol. vi. All of these old accounts are to be read with great care, and the student should refer to the narratives of Mr. Deane and Mr. Fiske for corrections of many of their palpable mistakes. Thus the discourse to Butrigarius ascribed to Sebastian Cabot, given by Ramusio, places the death of John Cabot in 1496, and makes Sebastian himself conduct the first expedition in that year. It also makes the purpose of the voyage of 1498 the discovery of a "north-west passage" to Asia, whereas the idea of a north-west passage through or around America to Asia did not enter men's minds for a quarter of a century after that. The passage which Hakluyt cites from Stow's *Chronicles* does not mention John Cabot, as Hakluyt makes it, but begins: "This year one Sebastian Gabato, a Genoa's son, born in Bristow," etc. Here, however, the change by Hakluyt is in the interest of truth.

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